

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

UNCLAS EC BRUSSELS 01480

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR,EGEN,EEC,SP

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DEBATES EC ATTITUDE TOWARD SPAIN

1. ON FEBRUARY 11 LUXEMBOURG FOREIGN MINISTER THORN AND EC VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES PARTICIPATED IN A LENGTHY UNSCHEDULED DEBATE ON SPAIN AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. THE DEBATE WAS PRECIPITATED BY A QUESTION POSED TO THE COUNCIL AND COMMISSION REGARDING A JANUARY 14 STATEMENT MADE BY THORN ON GERMAN TELEVISION TO THE EFFECT THAT THE SPANISH REGIME HAD CHANGED AND THAT TALKS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND SPAIN WERE CONSEQUENTLY TO BE RESUMED. RESPONDING AS COUNCIL PRESIDENT, THORN SAID THAT THE COUNCIL DECISION TAKEN ON JANUARY 20 WENT IN THE SAME DIRECTION. HE SAID THAT THE COUNCIL "AFTER NOTING THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION NO LONGER PROHIBITED THE RESUMPTION OF CONTACTS WITH SPAIN WITH RESPECT TO NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN BROKEN OFF LAST OCTOBER, HELD AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON RECENT TALKS WITH THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND NOTED THAT OTHER TALKS WERE TO TAKE PLACE SHORTLY." THORN ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS ARE ALONG THE RIGHT LINES, "WE ARE NOT EVEN CONTEMPLATING THE POSSIBILITY OF A CHANGE OF INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND

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THE EEC."

2. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS,EC VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES NOTED THAT IT WAS NOT A MATTER OF RESUMING DISCUSSIONS AT THE LEVEL AND STAGE AT WHICH THEY HAD BEEN BROKEN OFF AND THAT THE COMMUNITY'S SUBSEQUENT ATTITUDE WILL DEPEND ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN. STATING THAT " WE ALL HOPE THAT SPAIN WILL HAVE A PLURALIST DEMOCRACY" BUT THAT PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO SPEED UP THIS PROCESS AS SUGGESTED BY ONE MP. "WOULD NOT BE VERY WISE."

3. THE PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE DEBATE WERE DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE OF RESUMING NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN. SPOKESMEN FOR THE COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST GROUPS DEPLORED THE INADEQUACY OF PROGRESS MADE IN SPAIN TOWARD DEMOCRACY,WHILE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT AND LIBERAL MPS DENOUNCED THE HYPOCRACY OF THE COMMUNITY ABANDONING THESE NEGOTIATIONS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BEING PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH COUNTRIES LESS DEMOCRATIC THAN SPAIN. THE LATTER ALSO CONTENTED THAT IN ORDER TO EXERT AN INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATIO IN SPAIN WITHOUT INTERFERING IN INTERNAL MATTERS,THAT THE COMMUNITY MUST RESUME NEGOTIATIONS. SOAMES STATED HIS GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THIS OPINION,AND REFERRED TO THE DESIRE OF ALL TO SEE SPAIN DEVELOPING TOWARD A GENUINE DEMOCRACY,WITH THE PROSPECT OF POSSIBLE EC MEMBERSHIP AND ADDED THAT THE RESUMPTION OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COULD PLAY A ROLE IN THAT PROCESS.  
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